



## People with Disabilities

"I remain committed to tearing down the remaining barriers to equality that Americans with disabilities face today."

President George W. Bush  
July 26, 2001

The Federal government has established a special hiring authority for people with disabilities. The goal is to increase the number of people with disabilities hired into Federal service while ensuring they are not discriminated against in any way. Executive Order 13163 was established to promote an increase in the opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be employed at all levels and occupations in the Federal government. Agencies are expected to use available hiring authorities, expand outreach efforts, and increase efforts to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Federal agencies fill their vacancies in one of two ways - competitively and noncompetitively. People with disabilities may apply for jobs either way. Either way, in order to be selected for a job, the applicant must meet the qualification requirements for the jobs and be able to perform the essential duties of the job with or without reasonable accommodations.

Competitive job opportunities can be found through the website [www.USAJOBS.opm.gov](http://www.USAJOBS.opm.gov), which is a job search website announcing vacancies for most agencies. Another way to find competitive jobs is through [www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov), which is the government web portal that connects to the websites for each individual agency where you can find details on careers/job opportunities for the agency of your choice.

For noncompetitive (Schedule A) hiring, a person must meet the definition for being disabled. The person must have a severe physical, cognitive, or emotional disability; have a history of having such disability; or be perceived as having such disability. The person must obtain a certification letter from a State Vocational Rehabilitation Office or the Department of Veterans Affairs. Once they have the letter, the applicant may send it along with an application to the Selective Placement Program Coordinators at the agency of their choice. Each agency has a Selective Placement Program Coordinator and a directory of these individuals can be found on the OPM website [www.opm.gov/disability](http://www.opm.gov/disability). The individual websites for organizations within the Federal government, accessible via [www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov), also contain information on how to contact their Special Placement Coordinators.

There are also opportunities for students with disabilities to work for the Federal government. First, the website [studentjobs.gov](http://studentjobs.gov) provides applicants with comprehensive information about Federal jobs and internships available to students with or without disabilities. Also, the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) aims to provide summer work experience, and in some instances, permanent employment for college students and recent graduates with disabilities. The program is coordinated by the Office of Disability Employment Policy ([www.dol.gov/odep](http://www.dol.gov/odep)) and the U.S. Department of Defense ([www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil)) and partners with other Federal agencies, each of which commit to providing summer jobs to students with disabilities.